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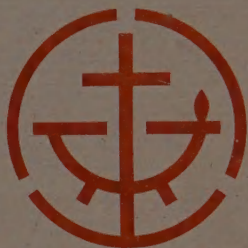
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# The Incarnation

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Theology

# THE INCARNATION

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BY THE  
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# THE INCARNATION

## I

“ UNUS AUTEM,—ASSUMPTIONE HUMANITATIS  
IN DEUM ”

THE atheist occupies a wholly impossible position. The climax of moral folly which he has reached subverts the very basis of his own personality, and renders any kind of argument unavailing. The agnostic defends himself with some show of reason. While not denying the existence of God, his description of the Deity as “unknowable” makes a subtle appeal to the perverted moral sense of humanity. Yet he is only less emphatically a “fool” than he who says in his heart “there is no God.” In either case the fundamental assumption is the same, viz. that a Divine Revelation is impossible. The man who says “God is unknowable,” finds himself confronted with a dilemma to which we may leave him; a god who cannot speak is no God; a god who could speak and would not, is immoral. We find ourselves backed up by the moral consciousness of the great bulk of human kind when we set

down as our postulates, God may be known—God has spoken. But when these are granted, we must set ourselves to answer the question “how did (and does) God reveal Himself?” Let us go back to the record of beginnings. And first we note that we quote Genesis and all Scripture without any apology to Science. Science concerns itself with efficient and mechanical causes and makes no pretence of being interested in final causes. Theology does deal with final causes and refers us to her sacred records. Turning to those records, it is most significant that the phrase “after its kind” has no place in the record of man’s beginning. There the Creator’s decree is “in our image, after our likeness.” Of man only is it thus suggested that there is given a capacity to know God—a power to respond to divine attraction. It is to man only that God is represented as speaking—man only can be the recipient and instrument of divine Revelation. We do not go so far as to say that other creatures have no consciousness of God. An explicit denial is perhaps impossible in the face of Saint Paul’s emphatic words about the expectation of the creature which is subjected to vanity in hope of a future deliverance. But we do say that God’s revelation of Himself is shown to be to man and through man.

Our records next direct attention to that awful catastrophe by which the relations between the



man and his Maker are so changed that free intercourse is no longer possible. God's purpose is not changed. He will still reveal Himself, but the mode of revelation must meet the changed conditions. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," may express allegorically the travail and agony through which the man must pass before he can win the bread of the Spirit—the knowledge of God which is life eternal. The purpose of God is kept alive in human consciousness by a succession of men to whom it is said God spake, and from Moses onward, within the circle of the chosen nation, emphasis is laid on the divine intention by the solemn "thus saith the Lord" with which the selected individuals prefaced their message from God. At the same time it is made increasingly plain that because of the intrusion of sin the return to free and happy intercourse with God cannot be an easy one. The Shekinah is shrouded in the Sanctum Sanctorum behind an impenetrable veil, and between it and the congregation there rises the brazen Altar with its awful ceremonial. Nevertheless, as we go back over the traditions we find the idea persists that the man is somehow to accomplish his deliverance and win his way back to God, or, to put it in another way, that God will disclose to man such a knowledge of Himself as shall be salvation.

The earliest tradition is explicit, though we may note the peculiarity of the phrase "*her*

seed." "He shall bruise" fixes the attention on some heroic figure standing out among the multitudes of the sons of men.

The promise to Abraham, as Saint Paul reminds us, singles out one among the descendants of the Father of the faithful.

Thus, from the beginning men are taught to look for One of their race who as leader and representative should battle victoriously with the opposing power and win back the lost Eden. When once the line of His descent is made clear, the special characteristics of the Deliverer assume prominence as He is regarded now from one viewpoint, now from another. He is to be "one of your brethren, a Prophet," Who shall receive and disclose a Revelation of God as full, and as fully sanctioned, as that which the terrifying Voice declared from Mount Sinai.

Later, when the way has been prepared for the disclosure, the coming Man is declared to be a King, the Shepherd of his people, and through succeeding centuries a succession of men of vision exhaust the possibilities of language as they describe the expanding glories of a Kingdom which is to include within its beneficent sphere the whole world of men.

As the portrait grows under the hands of inspired artists we discover another characteristic coming into prominence. The King appears as a "Priest upon his Throne," for thus saith the

Lord by Jeremiah, "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of Israel, neither shall the priests want a man to do sacrifice continually"—and the two statements are said to rest equally upon an immutable covenant. Thus the Man to be, as head and representative of His people, is to combine in His own person the three functions of Revelation, Government, and Mediation which are required to bring about a restoration of right relation between man and his Maker.

But amid the gorgeous pageantry of palace and temple glowing in the prophetic visions, there moves a figure pathetic, shadowy, and, it would seem, strangely out of place. Amid the glories of the Kingdom that is a Sanctuary, what place is there for the Suffering Servant? Sometimes He speaks as for Himself, sometimes He identifies Himself with Israel. Weighed down with sorrow, marred and broken, His suffering is on account of others, and out of His woe comes blessing for the people. Shall we say that He is the articulate conscience of a guilty race looking Godward? That He interprets the cryptic meaning of that Altar before the closed presence chamber?

Beyond doubt, He contributes one very essential feature to the portrait of the Man Who is to conquer. The Victory, the Kingdom, the Vision of God are possible only by the way of an offered life. The Man who has offended must make that reparation which *none but He can* make. What

else is Atonement but "a unity with God which has been achieved not by a divine feat, but by a choice of the human will that has repelled the last attack of God's greatest enemy!"

Thus far in our condensed survey of the promise of man's progress, it seems abundantly clear that out of the disorder due to the intrusion of sin, man is to find his way back to order and harmony—man who has forfeited the companionship of God is to be the medium of Divine communication—man is to regain the kingship for which he was created; but also, that man who has offended must make an act of reparation to the Majesty of God, and this is reinforced by the age-long teaching of type and figure and sacrificial ceremonial. But is not that just what man cannot do? The pathology of sin assures us that there can be no man who can escape the inexorable law, "the soul that sinneth it shall die," and where among the *disjecta membra* of humanity shall we look for the One Who shall express in Himself the solidarity of the race so that what He does they do—where He goes they go? The hope for man almost disappears in the dark shadow of the fact of man as he is. "Lord, what is man?" so questions the seer of a bygone day. Ages after, an apostle takes up his query and answers it in four words, "but we see Jesus."

For we come now to the great disclosure. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent

forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

So Saint Paul announces the good news of the coming of the Hope of Mankind, expressing in terms of Christian consciousness the early interpretation of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary.

The key to such an understanding as is possible of His nature and work is perhaps to be found in that title standing in significant contrast with the other titles assigned to Him and which was used only by Jesus, and of Himself—the title "The Son of Man."

It is new and unique. The language of Daniel's vision furnishes no parallel to the language of the Gospels. The true parallel to the prophet's *ὁ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου* is found in the *ὁμοίος υἱῷ ἀνθρώπου* of the Apocalypse. The seer is impressed with the human appearance of the figure in his vision. "Son of Man," without the article, as is the unvariable use of the Old Testament describes man as limited and transitory. Whatever share these phrases had in preparing for the new title, they are in no sense parallel to it. Indeed, there is nothing in the Gospels to show that "The Son of Man" was popularly held to be a title of the Messiah. It stands in the Gospel significant in its uniqueness as the Lord's descriptive title of Himself. The underlying idea is His real Manhood. If He were only *like* a Son of Man—then His Manhood is apparent and not real. To say

## The Incarnation

that He is *a* Son of man, grants the reality of His Manhood, but limits Him as one individual among the multitude. But "The Son of Man" sums up in Himself the potentialities of the whole race. He is the second Adam Who becomes a source of a higher life to all that humanity which He gathers up into Himself. Of no one *simply man* could it be said that he was "the man" or "the Son of Man" in whom the conception of Manhood reached its absolute perfection. Such modern titles as "the ideal man" or "the representative man" are too narrow in their range to give an adequate conception of "The Son of Man," and if not actually incorrect, yet seem to have a perilous tendency. A necessary inference from this view of His humanity may be expressed by the term—His *universality*. That is, He is in perfect sympathy with every human being of every age—a statement which is abundantly illustrated by the missionary work of the Church. All that truly belongs to humanity and to every individual in the whole race, belongs also to Him.

Another inference is expressed by the term, *solidarity*. Summed up in Him the race appears as a single entity—Man. When He acts it is Man that acts, when He suffers—humanity suffers. His perfect sacrifice of will is Man's devotion of Himself. In His perfect penitence, the whole race as one offers reparation to Divine Love. The bearing of this on attempted



explanations of The Atonement is evident. If man has gone wrong, nothing "Another" can do will make it right. *Man* must "arise and go to his Father." If the return to God be possible only by way of an offered life, *Man's* life must be the Sacrifice, not another's. If man must bear the penalty of disobedience, it is immoral to suppose that he may escape by unloading the penalty upon a substitute. Identification is a better word in this connection than substitution.

Nothing that has been said should necessarily lead to the conclusion that we are speaking of one who may be described as a *human person*. Indeed, the phrase "The Son of Man" properly understood, expressly guards us against that, even if we had not the complementary title "Son of God" to guide us. In our consideration of this latter title we are first struck by the fact that Jesus does not claim it, or at least put it forward as He does the title "The Son of Man." There are, I think, only four places, all in Saint John's Gospel, where He actually uses it of Himself, and in His self-revelation as recorded by Saint John, the term "The Father" occurs very much more frequently than "My Father." He refused the testimony of the evil spirits when they proclaimed Him "Son of God," but accepted the title when put on His oath by the High priest before the Sanhedrim. According to the Synoptists it would seem as if He purposely kept it in the

background, while making His words and works, His whole life, that is, a challenge—"what think ye of Christ?" Especially, the training of His chosen disciples was carried on with that in view—"Whom say ye that I am?" It is the supplementary record of Saint John that brings the title into full light. That narrative, outside the prologue, deals with the self-revelation of Christ to the world and to the disciples.

Let us note some characteristic passages (v. 17). When charged with having "loosed the Sabbath," His answer was, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Were the Jews right in understanding these words to mean equality with God? It would seem as if Jesus took pains to prove that they were right by arguing that perfect Sonship involves perfect identity of will and action with the Father, "The action and honour of the Son—he says—are coincident with the action and honour of the Father. It is through the action of the Son that men see the action of the Father, and it is by honouring the Son that they honour the Father." Or turn to the discourses connected with the feeding of the multitude,—Who and What is the Person Who could say, "I am the living Bread which came down from heaven"? Not "Bread of Life" only, but "living Bread"—Bread that has life in itself and conveys life. "If any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever, and the Bread that I will give is My Flesh?"

Consider, too, the question, "What, and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascending up *where He was before.*?" Before He came into the world the Son of Man *was in heaven*—the clearest possible statement of an unchanged personality. Connect with this the statement—preposterous on the lips of one who is a human person—"before Abraham was, I am." The Jews did not, nor can we mistake the implication. Shall we imitate them by heaping the stones of unbelieving criticism upon the speaker? One more quotation; this time from the very heart of the Gospel. "If a man love Me he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

Now if it be asked, Who is He that uses such words of Himself, deliberately and without any sense of incongruity? there can be but one answer, unless we are prepared to sacrifice our records and cut adrift from the evergrowing body of Christian consciousness—He who calls Himself "The Son of Man" is the Divine Person—God the Son.

After a long life of meditation upon what he had heard and seen and known of this unique person—the beloved disciple sums up the result in the most marvellous sentence human language knows—"The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us." This passage may well claim our attention for a short time since it expresses the main truths

connected with the Incarnation. To ask *how* "The Word became Flesh?" brings us to the verge of the Serbonian bog of Kenotic theories. I prefer to remain in the safe company of Bishop Westcott, who says, "How this *becoming* was accomplished we cannot clearly grasp. Saint Paul describes it as an 'emptying of Himself' by the Son of God—a laying aside of the mode of divine existence, and this declaration carries us as far as we can go in defining the mystery." It may be helpful to add to this the gist of Prof. A. B. Bruce's comment on the *locus classicus* in Philippians. He notes first of all that the main scope of the passage is to eulogize the humility of Christ, not to assert dogmatically the reality of His Humanity. He then points out that the passage assumes the pre-existence of the Incarnate Son—thus introducing the self-renouncing mind even within the sphere of Divinity. That the act of self-emptying involved a change of state for the divine Actor making it a *reality* even for God. That notwithstanding the change, the personality continued the same—it was not self-extinction. The humiliation being a perseverance in the mind which led to the *kenosis* implies not only identity of the subject but continuity of self-consciousness—giving infinite moral value to every act of Christ on earth.

Next, that Christ's life was emphatically a life of service—and lastly, that throughout the whole

process Christ was a free agent. He was not merely the passive subject of an involuntary experience. (The Humiliation of Christ.)

Whoever accepts this position as a starting point for speculation as to the self-emptying of Christ is not likely, I think, to get very far astray.

Returning to the announcement—"The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us"—it provides a foundation for at least five distinct statements respecting the doctrine of the Incarnation.

1. The Lord's humanity was *complete*—He became *flesh*—not a body.

2. It was *real* and *permanent*. He *became*, did not clothe Himself with flesh.

3. The human and divine natures remained without change—the union did not result in a third nature. *Word* and *flesh* side by side.

4. The humanity was universal and not individual—became flesh, and not *a man*.

5. As the sentence stands without any change to the subject of the verb, it shows that the two natures were united in *one person*.

There is not a difficulty in regard to the Incarnation which is not anticipated and answered by this unique sentence. The best possible commentary upon it is that invaluable document known as the Creed of Saint Athanasius, which I devoutly hope may never, amongst us, be deposed from its place of authority.

In the light of the Incarnation, how plain

become the prophetic records to us who see the things that prophets and mighty kings desired to see and did not see them. In particular, we are not confused when we read that the Child promised to the house of David shall be called "Miracle—The Mighty God—The Everlasting Father." With reverent understanding we hear of the Man who is Jehovah's "Fellow," and we can worship the Judge of Israel Who is smitten with the rod upon the cheek. Dark and mysterious must these words and visions have seemed to those through whom God spake *πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως*; but for us they outline the figure of One, the Son of Man and Son of God—Who announces as His special mission a revelation of God as complete as man needs or is able to bear. There is no uncertainty about His words—"the only begotten Son, He hath declared Him." "I will show you plainly of the Father." "No man hath seen God at any time," but being what He is, Jesus Christ is able—and no other is able—to disclose the truth of God. Notice the way in which He speaks of His coming—He came *ἀπο*—away from the Father—on His mission to the world—He came forth *παρά*—from the side of—emphasizing His fellowship with the Father. Again, He came *ἐκ*—out of God—into the world, meaning beyond all question that His connection with God is internal and essential.

Hence we are prepared for the answer to Saint



Philip's wistful assertion—"Lord, shew us the Father and it sufficeth us." "Hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." He Who came out from God reveals, not God in His absolute being—but the will and nature, the character of God. What God wants, how God acts is made clear. Sympathy and tenderness, insight and unerring judgment, sternness and even justice, by these the Divine nature is translated for us into terms of human life. More wonderful than this is the revelation of that divine characteristic which we call holiness; to the end of time the challenge "which of you convinceth me of sin?" must be met by silence. But above all, it is in the Sacrifice of Himself, that the climax of the revelation is reached. "So God loved the world," a love that for the sake of its object gives all. It is not a philosophy of life that the Gospel presents to men—but a Person. "We proclaim Christ," a Divine Person Who is Himself the Gospel—Who is Himself the eternal Life which He came to give—and to know Whom is to know God. That wonderful figure passing through the world of men moves even scepticism to venture half in scorn, half in hope, "So the All-Great were the All loving too!" But we, with myriads of souls, have found that this Person in Himself places beyond all possibility of doubt the confident statement in which Saint John sums up that which has been

revealed by Him—"God is Love"—a fact so profound that it will be the object of our contemplation throughout eternity, and yet so divinely simple that it satisfies the heart of the little child.

A point to be specially emphasized is that this revelation to man is made through man. The Son of Man—that is Humanity in its totality—is, so to speak, the Vehicle through Which God makes the full disclosure of Himself.

"And so the Word had breath, and wrought  
With *human hands* the creed of creeds  
In loveliness of perfect deeds——"

Jesus Christ from the manger to the grave, and beyond, filled out a truly human experience. By the absolute devotion of self-surrender, by the patient endurance of perfect obedience, the Manhood fulfilled its purpose as the highest mode of divine expression.

As we study the portraiture of that Manhood set forth in the Gospels we see that at last, the divine Word, "Let us make Man in our image, after our likeness," is fulfilled. God and man are once more face to face in a perfect fellowship; what God is, that the Man now knows, and is Himself an embodied revelation of the divine. Nor is there any confusion; God is God unchangeable; and Man is Man, but the condescension of the Godhead in creation is completed in the condescension of the Godhead in the Incarnation;

and the destiny of man is unfolded by the taking of the Manhood into God.

Being what He is, Jesus Christ not only reveals God, but also is Himself a revelation of man. In creation man, as a thought of God, is given objective existence. He appears, a thinking, acting being, capable of making a response to his Creator. In the Eternal Mind man is perfect and complete—but as a mode of expression under the conditions of time, man is *becoming*. So much science hints at, following the universal analogy.

The purpose and value of man is disclosed in his highest expression—not in what he is at any one point of time—but in what he is meant to be and is becoming. We have a witness to this in the fact that an Ideal is fundamental to human thought. Man thinks of himself objectively as something greater, stronger and nobler than he is. As all that truly belongs to the whole race is summed up in the Son of Man; therefore all that truly belongs to any individual, irrespective of sex or family, belongs also to Him. Every individual then, sees in Jesus Christ his ideal—that is, finds in Him the man God meant him to be. At the same time that vision discloses by contrast the man he has made of himself. For this reason Christ's coming was a sentence of judgment that is self-fulfilled. "This is the judgment, that Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than Light."

The unbeliever is convicted from within. "The manifestation of perfect holiness presented to the world in perfect self-sacrifice has set us a standard which cannot be put out of sight." It is impossible for me to deceive myself either as to what I am or as to what I am meant to be—the issues are plain, the former ends with a resurrection to death—the latter necessarily involves resurrection to life.

Yet judgment must not be conceived as automatic. It is unquestionably a divine prerogative, and therefore the assumption of judgment by the Son of Man illuminates the question of His Person. But, on the other hand, it is said definitely that the Father, has committed judgment unto Him, "because He is Son of Man." The term without the article, used here only in this Gospel, fixes attention upon the nature rather than the person. Because He is "Son of Man," *i.e.* truly human, it is fitting that He should exercise this function. Like the Advocate in the Epistle to the Hebrews the Judge must be in sympathy with him on whom he pronounces sentence, if that sentence is to be one of truth and justice. The perfect humanity of Christ is the ground of His perfect sympathy—the power of which lies not in mere capacity for feeling, but in lessons of experience, not, of course, experience of the sin, but of the strength of the temptation to sin which only the sinless can know in its full intensity. It is worth

pointing out that the Church's grandest hymn of praise contains the words "We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge," words which surely should always be sung in tones of fervent triumph rather than in plaintive minor notes expressive of trembling fear.

The Son of Man was done to death by the hands of wicked men. Apart from any question of the value and effect of His death, from our viewpoint of His Manhood it was inevitable. Had it not been foretold, we should still be obliged to say, "Thus it behoved." Even a heathen philosopher could foretell the necessary fate of a perfectly righteous man at the hands of the world as he knew it, and Plato's memorable sentences may well be classed among those rare flashes of insight known as unconscious prophecies. That world which "lieth in the Evil One," could not but hate one from God who lived truth and holiness, and was in its midst a living judgment. Unswerving obedience which makes no compromise with the evil power, must always go forward to death. His death then was no accident, but the natural sequence of that announcement in the world "This is my Beloved Son." It was the climax of that offered life by which humanity that had offended made reparation to eternal righteousness.

But if His death was inevitable, His resurrection was no less so.

"What shall I do to inherit Eternal life?"

There spoke the ineradicable instinct of human nature. It was made for life, not for death. It was a life, not a death, that God wanted—hence the significance of the phrase “the blood is the life.” “This do, and thou shalt live,” is the answer, and a true one. But what help does that offer to the sons of men who must say “behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin hath my mother conceived me”? The obedience even unto death of Him Who gathers into Himself all that belongs to humanity wins for that humanity the great prize. It was impossible that He should be held down by death. “Him hath God raised up,” thereby vindicating for ever His life and work. That resurrection was also the assurance that man had regained his lost kingship; that through all seeming failures, through all shocks and catastrophes the Divine purpose moves surely to a Divine event; that nothing which really belongs to humanity, nothing truly, worthily, beautifully done or thought shall be lost in the great result.

Since then manhood has regained the dominion, it is further inevitable that manhood should be enthroned. “He was received up into heaven, and sat upon the right hand of God.” As regarding the Divine Person of the Son of Man—this was, in the language of time—a return; but as regards His human nature it was the triumph and exaltation of a Manhood so perfected through discipline that It expresses fully and completely



the Mind and Will of God. There, at the very heart of all things Godhead and manhood meet in one Christ, nevermore to be divided.

It is therefore not a divine caprice, but a divine principle that God shall do nothing for man except by Man. Once more the priest-king of Creation—man *has*, and, if the word be allowable, administers the knowledge of God which is life eternal disclosed in the great Name pronounced by the Son of Man just as He withdrew from earth ; the Name of a God who meets every need and satisfies every aspiration of the man made in His own image and likeness ; the Name interpreted for us by the life and work of Jesus Christ as Love, Redemption, and Sanctification.

## II

“UNUS AUTEM,—ASSUMPTIONE HUMANITATIS  
IN DEUM.”

WHEN the Son of Man should have accomplished His exodus—what would become of His message? The world of men knew nothing of Him. He left no organization behind Him, no book to preserve the memory of His words and work. The little handful of insignificant friends was unanimous in its misunderstanding of His purpose. The Roman historian gives Him half a line, misspelling His name in contemptuous indifference. However, we do not look to the world for an answer, but we turn to the personal witness of those who “heard and knew and saw and handled the Word of Life.” They furnish an explanation which has two parts. The first is, that the action of the Son of Man instead of coming to a close at His Ascension had really only begun. Here we pass from the field of history into that of Theology. The risen and ascended Christ at the right hand of God is one of the earliest and most cherished Christian ideas. In the Gospels, beside the picture of the human life of the Son of Man, there are visions of a life of glory,

sovereignty and judgment, and these ideas form an essential part of the groundwork of the other New Testament writings. This is evident in those reports of Apostolic addresses given in the Acts, with their insistence on the passion and exaltation, the Humanity being so emphasized that Saint Paul could say, "Through *this Man* is preached unto you forgiveness of sins." In the Apostolic letters, Christ is spoken of as "sitting"—in the attitude of sovereignty—as in Saint Stephen's vision He appears "standing" in readiness to help. He is the Royal Priest, to Whom angels, authorities, and powers are subject, and Who ever liveth to make intercession. The practical bearing of the theology of the Epistles is vividly set forth in the Revelation of Saint John which was not written to teach Christian doctrine, but to inspire Christian hope. Its wonderful visions open to us the mind of Christians as to their glorified Lord. It is the same Master Whose humiliation they witnessed, but the weaknesses and limitations of His humanity have finally passed away. He reaps the harvest of the earth, or comes forth conquering and to conquer, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, wearing the diadems of many empires. "To His own He is all in all. He loves them, has redeemed them, has made them what they are, a kingdom of priests. His ascension has not separated Him from them; He is in their midst regulating all

the affairs of His Church ; removing, punishing, guarding, giving victory as He sees fit. From Him are to be obtained all spiritual gifts and helps : from Him are expected the final rewards. He penetrates the inner life of the faithful : He leads them on and they follow Him ” (Swete). Such to the mind of those Christians was the activity of their ascended Lord.

The second part of the answer to our question is found in a portion of Christ’s own revelation which was not touched upon in the previous lecture—the revelation of the Spirit. In that tender leave-taking of His apostles, recounted by Saint John, Christ tells them that after His withdrawal they shall not be left orphaned, bereft of Guide and Counsellor. There shall come to them One, unmistakably a Person—the emphatic pronoun *ἑκεῖνος* marking His personality—Who as to His mission and work is so connected with the Father and the Son that the coming of the One is spoken of as the coming of the Other. He has a mission to the world to “convict it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment”—always in reference to the Person of Christ. His mission to the disciples is to be an eternal abiding for the purpose of teaching, or recalling to their memories the words of Christ, of guiding them “into all *the* truth”—lit. into the truth in all its parts—and of “declaring unto them the things that are coming.” His whole action is to glorify

Christ, for “*mine* He shall take and shall show it unto you.”

It is to be noted that while He has a mission to the world, the Spirit is to “abide in” and “be with” the disciples. As to the world, His influence is to be exerted, as it were, from without ; but as to the disciples, within the common life of the “friends” of Christ, His divine infallible guiding was to carry them forward into an ever-increasing knowledge and apprehension of the person and work of their Master. It is not likely that, when the words were spoken, the Apostles understood fuller the purpose of this manifestation of Christ, to them and in them. Indeed, it may be that they considered it to be wholly for their own sake. The purpose was disclosed after the Resurrection in the acts and words of Christ. Visible to them in and through His perfected Humanity, He announces, “All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore.” He is God—but He is God acting through the Manhood. His purpose is for man and will be carried out *through men*. These, His chosen ones, He associates with Himself in such a way that to call them His accredited agents seems almost to limit the terms of their commission. “As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.” “I am with you alway, even all the days.” Their commission extends to the whole race, and beyond—“preach the Gospel to the whole creation.” Its

terms involve the application of the whole work of Christ to human need. As He came to reconcile Man to God, so to them does He entrust a ministry of reconciliation, in which they "in Christ's stead" shall appeal to men. They are to bring men into Christ's school in order that they may learn Christ, "the power of God and the wisdom of God;" and finally, they are to lift men up even as far as to God, that they "may be partakers of the Divine nature," by baptizing them "into the Name." The effect of their work will be to divide men into the two classes, believing and unbelieving. To those who accept the message and its conditions the result is salvation—for the others there is "judgment."

Made one with Him by the Baptism with His Breath for the reception of the commission, the Affusion of Pentecost endues them with that "power from on high" which ensures the efficiency of their work and the certainty of its result.

The Apostles, therefore, may be described as the point of contact at which the glorified Son of Man through the power of the Spirit shall, as it were, effect an entrance into the sphere of human life. Another view of their position is that they form a nucleus which grows by addition, a view which perhaps is inclusive of the former. When we speak of the Apostles "founding the Church" we must remember that the phrase is only a partial



statement of the fact we wish to express. The Church was already in the world to be added to, at the time of the first Baptism. "The Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved." An analysis of this statement shows that the Church already exists as a definite entity—that it grows by addition to it of individuals—that though the Apostles are the instruments by which, through Baptism, addition is made, yet the action is said precisely to be the Lord's. Addition to the Church means introduction to a process—being "saved," and inasmuch as it is a continued process *σωζόμενος*, therefore it is incomplete at any one point of time. The method of the process is also described as "continuing in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers."

Now, does all this enable us to answer the question, "What is the Church?" Were I more infallible by thirty years than I am, I should probably say "Yes" without hesitation; but infallibility drops away, and knowledge seems to shrink as time passes. What I feel inclined to say, remembering Saint Paul's phrase, "the heavenlies," is—"The Church *is* in Heaven, though it seems to spring out of the earth." Sight and insight, seeing and perceiving, these are antitheses we must keep in mind. What we *see* in the book of the Acts, or at any historical period, is the *outward* of the Church. Outward implies an

inward, and the necessary relation between the two must be acknowledged before we can begin to answer the question, "What is the Church?"

This necessary relation is, of course, fundamental to the doctrine of the Incarnation, "A Body hast Thou prepared me." Body is the utterance of Spirit, Spirit is the meaning of body. We can know God only through the material, yet we are careful to look to the inward to discover the meaning and value of the outward. Hence when Saint Paul tells us that the Church is the Body of Christ we feel that he has at least given us the direction along which our questioning should proceed.

Here, by way of caution, I should like to point out that according to Saint Paul's usage, "the body of the Christ" is always the Church. He refers to the individual human body of Christ as "His flesh" or "the body of His flesh." Also, that he uses the name Christ both with and without the article. Broadly speaking, the first form emphasizes the office, the second the Person holding it. Saint Paul's particular message has to do, not so much with "Christ after the flesh," as with the glorified Christ, the Christ yet to be manifested as the consummation of the purpose of God.

In his exposition of the doctrine of "the Church which is His Body" the Apostle begins by stating in the broadest terms the scope and content of

the Divine Secret—that the eternal purpose of God is “to gather up in one all things in the Christ.” Noting the article before “all things” we may read it “to sum up the universe in the Christ.” Our thought is thus at once lifted above the limited conception of a Selected People, to the miracle of a Catholic Church which shall fulfil the Christian hope of a universal good reaching both to “things in heaven and things on earth.” If confusion has entered the universe it is not of the nature of things; the underlying principle of unity will be manifested, for “in Christ all things consist.” To expel the confusion and restore the unity, the execution of the divine purpose must begin at that point through which confusion entered—human nature: the fact that in Christ “all things hold together” seems to suggest the remedy and its source—“God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.” But it is surely impossible for God to come in contact with a tainted humanity. For the carrying out of the divine purpose a new Creation is necessary. God will not make man over, He will make man anew. The head and crown of this new creation is the sinless Manhood Which has been taken into God. Christ is “the beginning of the creation,” “the first begotten of the whole creation.” “Baptized into Christ” is then a phrase which implies participation in the issues of the new creation. One by one, men

“dead in trespasses and sins” are lifted up by the power of a resurrection into the glorified Humanity of Jesus Christ. Of such it is asserted “we have been *created* in Christ Jesus,” distinctions of privileged and unprivileged, circumcision and uncircumcision have vanished, “there is a new creation.” And again, “If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation.”

We find this idea approached from the historical viewpoint with an added emphasis on the necessary issue in unity. Originally mankind had started as One, but through sin on the one hand, and on the other hand through the revelation of God to a chosen People, a division had come. Mankind was now two, there was the privileged Jew and the unprivileged Gentile. The new Creation is in Saint Paul’s mind a fresh beginning in history by which the old division is done away, and the unity of mankind is restored. “He is our Peace who hath made both one, that He might *create* the Two in Himself into one new Man.” Henceforth God deals with Man as a whole, a single individual as it were, in Christ, in Whom the dissevered elements of humanity are brought together by a “concorporation—“*σύνσωμος*”—the common life of a single organism. It is at this point that the idea of the Body emerges in a further unfolding of the Divine purpose—“That He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross.” Humanity, at peace in itself by the new creation,

is at the same moment brought nigh to God in peace.

This "One Body" is not the human body of the Lord Jesus as previously explained, but that One Body to which the One Spirit corresponds ; that larger Body of the exalted Christ which is the growing utterance of the divine Spirit. Saint Paul's concrete terms may well be placed here side by side—"One Man"—"in one body"—"in one spirit."

The relation of Christ to the Body is approached from two sides, it is a relation of Headship and also a relation of identity. "Him hath He given to be head over all things to the Church which is His body." The one Body, vitalized by the one Spirit, depends for its existence upon one Lord, its divine Head, to whom it is united by one Faith and One Baptism. It is the function of the Head to secure the safety of the body and provide for its welfare ; and this responsibility to protect is inseparably linked with the right to rule. Side by side with this there is the conception of a relation of identity ; one result perhaps, in the Apostle's thought, of that Voice on the Damascus road, "Why persecutest thou Me?"

In that great passage in 1 Cor. where Saint Paul works out the metaphor of the Body and its parts, Christ is not described as a part, but rather as the whole of which the various members are parts, and the Church is actually called "ὁ Χριστός"—

“as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body being many are one body—so also is the Christ.”

This teaching parallels exactly the allegory of the vine. There the Lord does not say, “I am the trunk of the vine, and ye are the branches growing out of it,” but rather, “I am the living whole, and ye are the parts whose life is dependent on the whole.” So too, Saint Paul applies the mystery of marriage, speaking with reference to Christ and the Church, “the twain shall become one flesh,” *i.e.* identity is the relation in view.

At the Charleston Church Congress, in April of last year (1913), Dr. DuBose said in reference to this relation of identity, “As truly as God was in Christ, so is Christ in His Church, carrying on the work of which the foundation only was laid in His own person. The Church not only as ideally conceived, but as actually in being and in operation, is as truly Christ, as my body is myself; and its vital and essential functions are as much His, as my bodily acts are mine.”

Interwoven with this conception of identity—the Body is the Christ—there runs an idea startling enough, but with immense possibilities of fruitfulness. The idea is that in some sense incompleteness may be predicted of Christ.

“And Him hath He given to be head over all things to the Church which is His body, the fulness of Him Who all in all *is being fulfilled.*”

A parenthesis is required here to explain that the reading just quoted has the support of the three great ancient versions, and it is accepted by such Greek fathers as Origen and Chrysostom, while only the Syriac Vulgate supports our English version "fillet all in all."

The Church, then, is the fulness of Him Who all in all is being fulfilled.

The Apostle seems to say that in some sense the Church is that without which the Christ is not complete—that the Christ is waiting for completeness, and is destined in the purpose of God to find completeness in the Church. Dr. Armitage Robinson, who is my guide upon this point, gives some illustrative instances of the use of the word "πλήρωμα." It is, for example, the cargo of a ship—that with which the ship is filled. A stronger sense is found in a class of expressions like "πλήρωμα σπυρίδος"—a basketful—*i.e.* a fulness in exchange for emptiness. A third shade of meaning he finds in Aristotle's criticism of Plato's city. Certain elements are necessary to the simplest form of a city. These, together form the "πλήρωμα" of the city. Without them you cannot have a city complete. This, Dr. Robinson says, illustrates Saint Paul's usage in the text above quoted, where the Church is spoken of as that without which the Christ Himself is incomplete. Indeed we can see that a Head is incomplete without a body. How can it perform

its functions apart from the body? But though the Christ incarnate is no longer on earth as He was, yet He is not without a Body through which on earth He fulfils His functions. He still lives and moves among men. So teaches Clement of Alexandria: "Even as through the body the Saviour used to speak and heal, so aforetime through the prophets and now through the apostles and teachers. For the Church subserves the mighty working of the Lord. Whence both at that time He took upon Him man, that through Him he might subserve the Father's will; and at all times, in His love to man, God clothes Himself with man, for the Salvation of men, aforetime with the prophets, now with the Church."

It is clear then that there is a sense in which we can speak of the Church as the fulness or completion of the Christ. To say "He is the Head of the body," is not all the truth. Head and body together is the Christ, and hence without the Church the Christ is incomplete; as the Church grows towards completion the Christ grows towards completion; even until the Christ is "all in all fulfilled."

There is a hard passage in the Epistle to the Colossians which we may compare with the foregoing. "I fill up in your stead the deficits—*ὑστερήματα*—of the sufferings of the Christ in my flesh, on behalf of His body, which is the



Church." If the Church and the Christ are one, their sufferings are also one. Then the Christ has not suffered all that He is destined to suffer, and the Church, the completion of the Christ, will complete the Christ's sufferings. May we not conclude, therefore, that, the Body and the Head being one organism, the growth of the Body in time is the development of the Christ towards fulfilment, even as the sufferings of the Body are the sufferings of Christ and the persecutor of the Body is the persecutor of Christ. If we bear in mind the peculiar relation of Christ to His Church we shall not be confused when fulness or fulfilment is predicted sometimes of one, sometimes of the other ; now, as though it were already attained, and now, as the goal of a long-drawn-out process. The issue of the new Creation is to be attained "in Christ," and at the same time "in" and "through the Church." Christ Himself is spoken of as filling or fulfilling all things, and also as "all in all being fulfilled." It is asserted that "in Him all fulness dwells," while the Church is expressly said to be the fulness of Christ. In one passage, fulness belongs at once to Christ and His Saints, "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead in a bodily way, and ye are fulfilled in Him." Christ's fulness is of necessity the Church's fulness—all the fulness of the Godhead expressed in a Body ; a Body in which you are incorporated, so that in Him the fulness is yours.

The climax of the Apostle's thought goes even beyond knowledge, "That ye may be filled with all the fulness of God." "All things gathered up in Christ," return at last to their creative source and the full circle is complete—the fulness which is in Christ, and unto which the saints are being fulfilled—when "God shall be all in all."

With this wonderful thought as our possession, we can contemplate with equal mind the temporal spectacle of things as they are. The weaknesses and failures of the Church do not affect the final result. They are at once the necessary conditions of progress and the discipline by which perfecting is assured. They do not make her any less the Body of Christ than the sins and shortcomings of God's child make him any less the saint. She is now, what she is becoming. The life of the body and the life of the Head is one, and therefore she does not hesitate to speak of herself as dead and risen with Christ, as ascended with Him into the heavens, and as sharing His throne. Living in the heavenly places, the Body of the royal priest carries out on earth the work of His kingly priesthood. The purpose which He fulfils is being fulfilled in her and through her. Her eye follows the course of the river of God which watereth the earth, as she stands in ceaseless intercession—

"Watching with eternal lids apart,  
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,  
The moving waters at their priestlike task  
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores."

The vision is hers, "What God did cleanse that call thou not common"—teaching her that everything truly human is capable of sharing in that extension of the Incarnation which finds expression in herself, and her unceasing service prepares and offers out of the nations a sacrifice acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ. Without such knowledge, how hazardous and even bizarre an experiment the building up of a Catholic Church would seem to be. Jew and Greek—barbarian and Scythian—bond and free—what a welter of heterogeneous elements is this world of men, out of which the Church must draw the material for "the Christ that is to be!" All the differences and distinctions of race and custom, condition and education, temperament and capacity, must be drawn together into one harmonious whole.

But one by one the Church brings individuals within the sphere of the action of the spirit of Unity and Truth, and as they are taken up into the life of the Christ, this manifold variety is made to do its share in the manifestation of the "very varied wisdom of God." To all those gathered up into the manhood of Christ the Church can say, "Ye are all one man in Christ Jesus." This unity in variety is a necessary feature of the Church's life as it grows into the fulness of the Christ, since only in proportion as its catholicity becomes a reality is its true power and richness made manifest. Each new race which is brought

into the Church not only itself receives of the fulness of Christ—but also by its peculiar gifts brings out new and unsuspected aspects and beauties of Christ's truth and influence.

I presume these words of Bishop Gore are familiar to us all: "How impoverished was the exhibition of Christianity which the Jewish Christians were capable of giving by themselves! How much of the treasures of wisdom and power which lie hid in Christ awaited the Greek intellect, and the Roman spirit of government, and the Teutonic individuality, and the temper and character of the Kelt, and the Slav, before they could leap into light. And can we doubt that now again Christianity would be unspeakably the richer for the gifts which the subtlety of India, and the grace of Japan, and the silent patience of China are capable of bringing into the City of God."

Perhaps it would be well for us to dwell for a little upon the idea of Unity which lies at the heart of the doctrine of the Church, remembering the words of the great Intercession, "that they also may be one, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." First of all, it is the result of a common inward life, and is thus explained by Saint Chrysostom: "As in a body it is a spirit which holds all together, and makes that to be a unity which consists of different limbs, so it is in the Church, for the Spirit was given for

this purpose that He might unify those who differ in race and variety of habits."

It is not, therefore, such a unity as is produced by outward government, after the pattern of an earthly empire, but is like a unity of blood and race which exists in spite of all outward differences.

Next, this unity is not complete in this world. Only the lower limbs of the body are on the earth at any particular moment. As Saint Augustine says: "The *whole* Church, made up of *all* the faithful, because *all* the faithful are members of Christ, has its head situate in the heavens which governs this body, though it is separated from them by sight, yet it is bound to them by love."

In the third place, it is a Unity in the Truth. Its foundation is a divine revelation given in the person of Christ Who is acknowledged to be "Lord." That confession, therefore, involves belief in the "one God and Father," the "one Lord," Jesus Christ the Son of God, and the "one Spirit," which is His gift. That is, a creed which formulates the doctrines of the Trinity, and the Incarnation is at the basis of the Christian life. It is wise to keep in mind the essential characteristics of Unity, in these days when what is called "reunion" is being widely discussed, for there are many whose conception of the Common Life is so defective that they ought to

be asked: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" and who are so ignorant of the common Faith that they are prepared to undertake the construction of a "Creed." Apollos was an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, but he learned something from Aquila and Priscilla.

All that has been said, helps, I trust, to illuminate the practical problem of the Church's life and work in the world; Christ is not only to be possessed, Christ is to be realized. In the growth to completion of the Christ Who is being fulfilled, Gethsemane and Calvary must have their place, if there is to be an Ascension to glorious perfectness. For though the "one new man" is created in the Christ he has a long growth before him. "Christ is still lacking in respect of those who are yet to come to Him." But the pain and travail of this present time are swallowed up in the glory of the Ideal and the certainty of its attainment. The Church, or let us say the Christ in the world, sees the fruition of faithful work and patient endurance in the splendid consummation of human life, when "we all"—literally all of us together—"come to a perfect Man." Then shall we understand that mystery of our faith, "the taking of the Manhood into God," when Humanity has arrived at the full measure of the complete stature of the fulfilled Christ. For "the way of Man is the Vision of God."

“Man as yet is being made, and ere the crowning Age of ages,  
 Shall not æon after æon pass and touch him into shape ?  
 All about him shadow still, but, while the races flower and  
     fade,  
 Prophet eyes may catch a glory slowly gaining on the shade,  
 Till the peoples all are one, and all their voices blend in  
     choric  
 Hallelujah to the Maker, ‘It is finished.’  
 Man is made.”

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light,  
 look favourably on Thy whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery, and by the tranquil operation of Thy perpetual providence carry out the work of man's salvation ; and let the whole world feel and see that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and all things returning to perfection through Him from Whom they took their origin, even through our Lord Jesus Christ.

### III.

#### “ UNUS AUTEM—ASSUMPTIONE HUMANITATIS IN DEUM ”

HITHERTO, our consideration has been directed mainly to the potential value of the Church which is so truly the “extension of the Incarnation,” that it may be called “the Christ.” We, however, are the subjects of temporal experience, having to do with things as they are, and our ever-present question is, “How does the potential become for us the actual?” The Incarnation and its results are in the eternal counsel of God complete, for “He hath put all things under His feet;” yet for us, under conditions of time, the process of actualizing the counsel of God is being fulfilled, since “we see not yet all things put under Him.” The Incarnation is a revelation of that divine purpose that “willeth all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.” Face to face with an organized kingdom of evil entrenched in the world of men, we want to know by what power and through what method are all things being brought back to their true allegiance, or, to express it in another way, “What is the meaning to us in the present of ‘being saved’?” “Union with God” is, I suppose, the widest



possible definition of salvation. That being accepted, it is quite plain that a man cannot bring about that union for or by himself. The initiative must come from without and above himself. There is a useful illustration in Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." He points out the impossibility of any ascent from a lower plane of life to a higher, except through contact with a higher life. Inorganic matter is raised to a higher level by the touch of the vital principle in the plant, and again animal life in contact with vegetable elevates and transforms the latter. Here we have an analogy to the fundamental spiritual law, that a man must be born anew if he is even to see the Kingdom of God. Our consideration of our topic must have been to little purpose, if we have not already recognized that the divine touching which comes upon a man from above is through the operation of God the Holy Ghost. In the beginning of the Gospel, the action of this divine Person is directly involved in the taking of the Manhood into God, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee . . . therefore, that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." The Holy Life is the result of His abiding in the Humanity of Jesus Christ, and as we have already seen, He is declared to be abiding in what I venture to call the extended Humanity of Jesus Christ as its Life and Power. Hence we are quite prepared

to hear the inspired record of early Christianity described as "the Gospel of the Holy Ghost." The first page of the Acts tells us that He "came" according to the promise, and thereafter that which is done in the Church, and by the Church, is freely and naturally ascribed to Him. So impressed are the Apostles and Elders with the sense of His presence and personal action that they are able, without any apparent sense of incongruity, to preface a formal decision with the astounding words: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us." The phrase affords us a significant conjunction of the outward and the inward of the Church. If there be no inward, what possible meaning or value can be attached to the outward? But the reality of the inward demands an outward through which it may find true expression. However, throughout the Acts, the personal energy of the Holy Ghost is made abundantly manifest in the activities of the Church, and to be "added to the Church" means that those so described are brought within the touch of a personal influence which otherwise must remain outside their lives: "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

The phrase, "which otherwise must remain outside their lives," raises a question as to the sphere of the Spirit's work. We must limit the scope of the question by noting that we are not now considering the Spirit, immanent throughout

the *Old* Creation as Lifegiver—but the Holy Ghost as the “Spirit of Christ,” “Lord and Lifegiver” in that *New* Creation through which all things are to be gathered up in Christ.

From this point of view, I think it is quite plain that the sphere of His action is the glorified Humanity of Jesus Christ. This is suggested by the use in the account of the Baptism of the emphatic personal form—*τό πνεῦμα*, or *τό πνεῦμα τό ἅγιον*, in marked contrast to the form without the article, denoting a gift or operation, which is used in connection with individuals. The personal Spirit in all His fulness descended upon the sinless Humanity of Jesus Christ and so may be described as the Spirit of Christ. This descriptive phrase receives added force from the fact that the Spirit comes to the Church from Christ, according to His promise, and by His sending. The fulness of the holy unction received by the head, flows down to the very skirts of the priestly robe. The Body of Christ is vitalized by the Spirit of Christ, making Head and Body one living organism. As Christ is not conceived as acting apart from His Body, so neither can the Spirit of Christ be conceived as acting without the Body. Is it possible, in fact, to think of any other mode in which the Spirit of Christ *could* act? The individual therefore, cannot share in the issues of the New Creation, until he is brought within the range of the action of the Spirit of

Christ. If he is not within the Body of Christ, he is not a partaker of the Spirit of Christ. It is true that the Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, but that is effected by manifesting Christ through His action *within* the Body of Christ, an action which must be, as regards the world, an action from *without*. Possibly some one may quote, "in every nation he that worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." While these words are blessedly true, and may express a result of the external action of the Spirit, they certainly do not assert, or even imply, that such a person is a new creation in Christ, and nothing less than that will satisfy the New Testament term—"being saved."

When we come to inquire as to the mode by which in the present, men are brought within that touch of the Spirit of Christ by which they are made to share in the New Creation, we see at the outset that it must be of such a nature as will meet and correspond with the complex nature of man. Man thinks and wills and loves—that is, man is—or if you like—has spirit. Yet without oxygen and nitrogen and phosphorus and carbon, man could neither think nor will nor love. Spirit is dependent upon matter for its expression. So also spirit craves intercourse with spirit, and finds that only through the material can it give utterance and permanence to all the varying phases of the inward spiritual story. The law

of the relation between spirit and matter is, as we have seen, carried out in the Incarnation—a material outward being the necessary and true utterance of the spiritual inward—"the extreme recognition," says Dr. Illingworth, "of the fact that all spiritual truth must be embodied in material form." Therefore in the extension of the Incarnation through the development of the Church, the Body of Christ, we find the same principle obtains, spirit using the material as the vehicle or instrument of its action. By the practice and precept of Christ illustrated in the Gospel, and leading up to the ordaining of the Sacraments by Him, matter is made ministrant to spiritual life. But the one necessary condition of this ministry of matter is that the material shall always be subordinate to the spiritual. "Man doth not live by bread alone." "It is the spirit that quickeneth." A spiritual man, then, is not a disembodied man, but a man dominated by spirit. He glorifies God *in his body*, and in his spirit, which are God's.

When one turns to the records of the Church, we find this general principle which we have been considering exemplified in the *growth* of the Spirit-bearing Body as defined by the phrase "added to the Church." The individual, a spirit acting through a body, is brought into touch with the Spirit-bearing Body of Christ, the point of contact being a specially functionalized member of that

Body, the Apostolic ministry, through the use by that ministry of material, visible symbols through which is given a spiritual grace, the inward of the symbol ; the result to the individual being plainly stated in Apostolic language as " the gift of the Holy Ghost." Those words " the gift of the Holy Ghost " mean at least, that the individual is brought within the special sphere of the action of the Spirit of Christ. Once within that region, also described as the Body of Christ, he will be moulded by the Creator Spirit according to the processes of the New Creation, until with his fellow-members he contributes his share to the fulness of the Christ.

The Church's doctrine of the Sacraments is the best evidence of her conception of the work of the Holy Ghost. Dr. Swete refers to this in these words : " It is He Who sanctifies and seals body and soul in Baptism ; Who makes the Bread and Cup of the Eucharist to be to the faithful the Body and Blood of Christ ; Who endues the ministers of the Church with the grace of Orders ; Who, through their acts and words, blesses and absolves. The Sacramental teaching of the ancient Church-writers loses the appearance of exaggeration which attaches to it in the judgment of many modern believers, when it is viewed in the light of the ancient doctrine of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. Men who held that the Creator Spirit, Who is the living Energy of

God, dwells in the Holy Catholic Church and is operative in her ministerial acts, could find no words adequate to express their sense of the greatness of His work in the Sacraments. To magnify the Sacraments was to magnify the Divine Spirit Who lived and wrought in the Body of Christ." Up to this point, we have really been preparing the way for a consideration of the doctrine of Christ concerning the initiatory Sacrament of regeneration as disclosed in the conversation with Nicodemus. The underlying idea is that of the New Creation. The teacher of the Jews could not get beyond the thought of a continuation of the present order ; but the Lord's first word lays down the absolute necessity of a new beginning, emphasizing His meaning by the use of the term " birth," His work was not simply to carry on what was already begun, but to recreate. The familiar English version " born again " is satisfactory provided we safeguard it against the notion of mere repetition. " *ἄνωθεν* " properly means " from the top "—the veil was rent " *ἄνωθεν* "—hence the connotation " from the beginning." In Gal. iv. 9, " Elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage," we find " *πάλιν ἄνωθεν* " which implies starting afresh, so as to obliterate every trace of an intermediate change. In early Christian tradition, the word used of Baptism is " *ἀναγεννάσθαι*," which, of course, means " to be reborn."

“How *can* a man be born again?” How can “the heir of all the ages” start afresh? is a perfectly natural objection, and Christ meets it by revealing the nature of the birth. Because it belongs to men now in life, it has an external element, because it carries men into a new world it has an internal element, and these are placed side by side, “born of water and of the Spirit.” It is important to note that the preposition used, ἐκ ὕδατος, suggests the idea of a resurrection; and, as it is not repeated before πνεῦμα—“of water and Spirit,”—we gather that birth of the Spirit is potentially united with birth of water. We may refer to the familiar parallel in Gen. 1, the original shaping of the Great Order out of chaos when the Spirit of God brooded on the face of the waters.

But flesh can only generate flesh; if a man is to have spirit-life, the means by which he enters it (his birth) must be spiritual. The offspring must have the essential nature of the parent. The action of the creative Spirit must result, so to speak, in a spiritual race. “Baptized into Christ,” the man has been given a new status which is described by the phrase “in Christ;” and, “if any man be in Christ there is a *new creation*.” He begins to be a new man. This wonderful truth receives additional illumination from the doctrine of the second Adam. The glorified Christ fulfils a relation to mankind



analogous to that in which the first Adam stands to his offspring. In each case, the relation is brought about through a birth, with all the implied consequences of a birth. "Like begets like ;" and as the first Adam can only pass on his own diseased nature, so in the second Adam will be begotten out of a pure nature "a holy generation" to people "the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

I would point out that the inevitableness of the unbroken law "like begets like," compels us to face the positive necessity of the Virgin Birth. It is only by maintaining the truth "He was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary," that we can in any way conceive how the entail of sin could be cut off, and a new point of departure provided for the race. No amount of plausible argument can alter the poignant fact attested by ages of human experience, that "in Adam all die." If all are to be "made alive," there *must* come another Adam—and only such an Adam as has been revealed to us can bring His many sons to glory. "In Christ shall all be made alive." It may be objected that the conditions of the New Creation involve the destruction of personality; that the ego "in Adam" cannot be identical with the ego "in Christ." It is impossible to enter here upon a discussion of personality. It will be sufficient for our purpose to follow Dr. Illingworth, who points out that

human personality of which the constituent elements are reason, will and love, is essentially alive, and is perhaps better described as an energy than as a substance. He says, "It lives and grows, but in so doing retains its identity, the character in which it issues being always an organic whole. Its unity may seem to vanish in the variety of experience through which it goes, yet only to reappear, enlarged, enriched, developed, or impoverished and degraded as the case may be, but self-identical." We may recall as bearing on this point the distinct appeal to the will made at the time of administration of the Sacraments: "Dost thou renounce?" "Wilt thou keep?" "Wilt thou be baptized?" "Take this." Whether then human personality be degraded "in Adam," or ennobled and enriched "in Christ," its identity remains unchanged in either status; sinful or righteous, it is always "I myself."

May I venture to put it in this way: Man is a spirit compelled under present conditions to express himself through a "body of death,"—he is "in Adam." By the power of the Spirit of Christ he is, through the new Birth, lifted up into the glorified Humanity of Jesus Christ, so that now, "in Christ," he gradually builds up for himself out of that Humanity by the operation of the same Spirit a "body of life" through which he shall express the Christ-like character. That is

to say, he “ puts on the new man, which after God is *created* in righteousness,” and from henceforth his “ life is hid with Christ in God.” The body of death departs, but the body of Life remains, “ a building of God, a house not made with hands.”

The life of the New Creation is then Christ’s life, ministered by the Spirit of Christ. It is lived “ in the heavenlies ” as its sphere, and according to the “ mind of Christ ” as its rule. It issues in the character of Christ as its result. Over that Life sin has no dominion, and death no victory. The use of the term “ Creation ” in this connection should lead us to understand the necessity of growth and development in the new Life. The embryotic germ of regeneration is potentially all that shall be, but the law of its life requires that it shall be guarded and nourished in order that its expansion and enrichment may be assured. This idea is met by the Sacrament of Confirmation which is complementary to the greater Sacrament of Baptism, and should always be considered in connection with it. This guarantees that larger activity of the Spirit of Christ, which is required to guide and guard the new life through the disciplinary and educative processes by which its development is drawn on to perfection. At the same time it admits to the exercise of that priesthood, which is an essential characteristic of the Body of Christ in which the

individual is a member, sharing with the whole in both offering and partaking.

This brings the New Life before us under two aspects ; on one side it is a "life of service, acceptable to God because rendered "in Christ," and fulfilling all that is involved in the terms, worship, praise and intercession ; on the other side, a life of development by assimilation of the Food ministered to it by the Spirit of Christ. This "Spiritual Food and Sustenance" is the subject of those discourses which Saint John has preserved in the 6th chapter of his Gospel, in which the Lord contrasts the food which, only by undergoing a process of change, supports a material life which is truly a process of death, with that Food which abides and is unchanging, remaining in the man as a principle of power issuing in Eternal life. This food of the higher life which He will give as the absolute representative of mankind, He describes first as the "bread of heaven," "the true bread," "the bread of God." It comes forth from the heavenly treasure-house, and not merely from a higher region ; it fulfils absolutely the highest idea of sustaining food ; it is given by God directly.

The next point in the revelation is Christ's identification of Himself with "the bread," in the phrase, "I am the Bread of Life," meaning, as Westcott points out, the food which supplies life, of which life is not a quality only as in the

term "living bread"; but, as it were an endowment which it is capable of communicating. But the presence of the gift is unavailing, unless the condition—"cometh" and "believeth"—is fulfilled in those who receive it. Where the condition is met, the issue of the communication of Christ is a resurrection, eternal life is consummated in the possession by the believer of a transfigured manhood.

After an objection as to His person had been met by words which emphatically mark His unchanged personality before and after the Incarnation, the revelation is further developed in reply to the question, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" How can one truly man impart to others his humanity so that they may take it to themselves and assimilate it? The answer comes in the words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you." We can find nothing better than Westcott's comment on these words. He says, "The flesh is presented in its twofold aspect as flesh and blood, and by this separation of its parts a violent death is pre-supposed. Further, the flesh and the blood are described as the flesh and blood of the Son of Man, by which title the representative character of Christ is marked in regard to that humanity which he imparts to the believer. And once again, both elements are to be appropriated individually.

By the flesh in this narrower sense we must understand the virtue of Christ's humanity as living for us ; by the blood the virtue of his humanity as subject to death. The believer must be made partaker in both. The Son of Man lived for us and died for us and communicates to us the effects of His life and death as perfect men." "This eating and drinking brings the object of faith into the believer," "He abideth in me and I in Him." So the climax of the revelation is reached, "he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." The absorption into his very being of the glorified Humanity of the Son of Man brings about a self-surrender which is perfect freedom ; freedom to live the only true human life—which Christ lives in Him and he lives by Christ, so that he shines forth as a "light-bearer," radiant with the glory of Christ's character. In strict accordance with Christ's words is the familiar teaching of the Church—that the "Body and Blood of Christ"—His Human Nature glorified and eternal by virtue of the union of the Godhead and Manhood in the Person of God the Son—"are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper," "to preserve both body and soul unto everlasting life." That "then we are one with Him and He with us." So that there is brought about a personal union between the believer and Christ, which is the fullness of divine life.

To prevent us from emphasizing the ideal at the expense of the actual, there may be noticed here that, according to our theology “*φρόνημα σαρκός*” doth remain, even in the regenerate.” This statement, which is, of course, in agreement with experience, is met by the fact that *penitence* is the very core of the new life. Our practice in teaching is to dwell upon the elements of penitence separately. This may possibly lead to a confusion of terms and a consequent misunderstanding. I should like to distinguish between *penitence*, which is an attitude of mind, and *repentance*, which for sinful creatures is a necessary step or stage towards penitence. True penitence is the form which love assumes as it contemplates sin, and which, as we have been taught, can be felt in its completeness only by a sinless one. Thus *we need to repent* before we can arrive at penitence; we cannot conceive of the Sinless Jesus *repenting*, though we can believe that for the sins of the world He presented to God a perfect penitence as Man’s act of reparation to outraged Love. His attitude toward sin was exactly God’s, and His untainted Manhood could realize the meaning of sin as we cannot who are familiar with its pollution. Hence He stands out as the perfect Penitent, whose abhorrence of, and sorrow for sin are purely satisfactory. While we can conceive of His penitence developing in fulness, we cannot think that there was in Him as in us the

need of “μετάνοια.” His human will was perfectly aligned with the divine, so that He could say, “I do always such things as please Him.” Therefore His penitence, His attitude toward sin, pleased God, and was accepted as Man’s sufficient reparation for Man’s disobedience.

Under the conditions of the New Creation the Spirit of Christ trains the personality of each individual to express itself in terms of Christ. The glorified Humanity is, as it were, the substance out of which He moulds the New man who is to have the mind of Christ. But because of the “infection of Nature” which remains in the regenerated individual, there is need of a change of mind—an inversion of self, “μετάνοια.”

This may be brought about gradually, and without observation, or it may not occur until that response to the Spirit’s action is drawn forth which is called conversion. But under any conditions the result is the same. Sin is viewed from Christ’s standpoint. Repentance grows into penitence, as awakened love recognizes and responds to the Love that gave all. But this response of penitence is not *me*, but *Christ in me*. That every penitent must and does acknowledge. It is the outcome of his self-identification with Christ, and though repentance may become a memory—penitence, the mind of Christ toward sin, advances steadily towards its perfect fulness and is the leading characteristic of the saint to the end of



his days. Nay, even beyond—for what is the triumphant hymn, “Thou has redeemed us by Thy Blood,” but penitence glorified as the service of perfected love.

There is no need then to use a theological fiction to tell a man that Christ’s penitence is in some way accounted his. It is a blessed and glorious fact that Christ’s penitence *is* my penitence. What Christ thinks, I think, what He wills, I will—yes, and what He does, I do ; because, by the power and presence of the Spirit of Christ, I am so identified with Christ that I am dying with Christ, and rising with Him, and am now living His life. The process of salvation does not need to be, indeed cannot be shown to be, both complete and intelligible *outside of* that which is called “I myself.” “It is,” says Dr. Moberly, “only through absolute oneness with the Spirit of Human perfection that the perfect meaning of Humanity can ever be touched or seen. We become our true selves consummated and complete, through the indwelling completeness of the Spirit of the Incarnate Christ.”

We may summarize the process of the New Creation as follows : By the sacramental action of the Spirit of Christ acting through the Body of Christ the individual is introduced into a new sphere of being, receiving by a birth a new life which is distinctly the gift of the glorified Son of Man. This new life being within the sphere of

operation of the Spirit of Christ is developed under the guidance of that Spirit through the appropriation—the “eating” and “drinking”—of Christ’s glorified Humanity. The element of discipline, necessitated by present conditions has for its aim the entire conformity of the human will to the divine. The issue of the process is such a personal union with Christ as that the believer is able to say: “Not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Thus living, not a life *like* Christ’s—but the *same life*, the true human life, having the same mind, the same interests, the same aim, Christ’s word, “where I am, there shall also My servant be,” is understood not so much as a promise, but as a necessary consequence. All that truly belongs to human life is guaranteed eternal preservation.

In order to preserve the balance of thought, we must carefully bear in mind the law of growth for the individual. The privileges which are granted him are bestowed with a view to the corporate life in which he finds himself. They cannot be enjoyed selfishly—such a seeking to save his life means ultimately the loss of life. He must learn more and more to live as part of a great whole, consciously realizing the life of membership, and contributing his share to its completeness. Thus he, with all his fellow-members are “to *grow up into Him* in all things,” so that the expanding faculties and powers of each one, and of all

together, shall find their full scope in the ever-enlarging life of the One Man.

Such is the work that the Church carries forward in her children ; steadfastly maintaining her purpose in the face of opposition ; enduring toil and sorrow and disappointment ; upheld by the wonderful vision, disclosed by her great Apostle, of a perfected Humanity reflecting with undimmed ray the glory of the Image of God.

Is it not worth while to watch and pray and work "till we all come to a perfect Man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of THE CHRIST !"

To Christ the King be all glory, dominion and praise now and for evermore. Amen.

THE END

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